

Have You Gotten Recharged Lately?

Introduction

Computer printers, like computers, are here to stay. The millions of printers in use also generate millions of spent toner and ink-jet cartridges.

But now there's an alternative to throwing out spent cartridges: recharging them with new toner or ink. Manufacturers can rebuild toner cartridges with new drums and other essential parts after users run a specified number of copies. You can also purchase refilled ink-jet cartridges or self-refill kits. Purchasing these recharged cartridges saves money and is good for the environment.

Recharged Cartridges Save You Money

Recharged cartridges generally will cost you less than purchasing a new "virgin" cartridge. These savings add up over time, but you can save money sooner by purchasing in large quantities.

Recycling and buying recharged cartridges also saves on disposal costs because you are throwing less away.

"Buying Recycled-Content Products Makes Cents"

Quality Products

The recharged toner industry has made many improvements in their products. Recharged cartridges have been available for many years, although early recharging technology was sometimes questionable and could result in leakage and poor image quality. A quality recharged cartridge will meet Original Equipment Manufacture (OEM) standards. All popular brands of cartridges can be remanufactured.

Most remanufactured cartridges are of good quality, with very low failure rates. Good office suppliers also provide quick service to exchange defective cartridges.

Save Landfill Space

Millions of plastic nondegradable cartridges are potentially destined for landfills. But when you recycle the used ones and buy recharged cartridges, you eliminate waste and save landfill space and tipping fee costs.

"Recycling Includes Buying Recycled-Content Products"

Where Can You Buy Them?

Recharged cartridges are generally available through your local office supplier and through specialty dealers. They are a very important promotional office supply item. Many retailers offer a pickup service for old cartridges when delivering newly recharged cartridges. Some manufacturers will even cover the cost of shipping the spent cartridges back to the factory.

Are They Reportable?

State of California entities are required to report any recycled-content purchases made in 11 categories of recyclable materials. Recharged toner cartridges are reportable in the plastic products (PL) category for the California Integrated Waste Management Board's State Agency Buy Recycled Campaign (SABRC). Recharged cartridges are an example of reuse, and they count toward your SABRC annual purchase requirements.



Who's Using Recharged Cartridges?

Many State of California agencies are currently using recharged toner cartridges in their operations with good results. Local and federal government offices, as well as those in the private and nonprofit sectors, benefit from using recharged cartridges.

Here's what State organizations have to say about cartridge and supplier performance:

Department of Water Resources Management Services Branch Sacramento, CA—Gary Bergeron

Gary gets very good performance out of both recharged ink-jet and toner cartridges for three very important reasons: 1) He practices good preventive maintenance on any printer before installing a cartridge. 2) Before using any recharged cartridge, Gary will try one cartridge on a “guinea pig” printer to test its performance. If the cartridge meets Gary's strict OEM performance requirements, he will consider purchasing more. 3) Most importantly, Gary has established a good business relationship with a reliable supplier who offers a quality product.

The above provides a good benchmark for anyone wanting to establish reliable procedures in obtaining quality recharged toner cartridges and ink-jet cartridges.

Department of Health Services Program Support Branch Sacramento, CA—Sandy Henderson

The DHS Program Support Branch has been using recharged toner cartridges since 1993 with few problems. They are reliable, and when a problem arises the supplier is quick to replace the cartridge.

California Integrated Waste Management Board Information Management Branch Sacramento, CA—Lynelle Belardi

The Information Management Branch (IMB) has been purchasing recharged toner cartridges for the CWIMB for the last three to four years. Although they have experienced some problems with past suppliers, their current supplier has provided a quality product with low failure rates and minimal problems. Cost differences between new and recharged cartridges vary depending on model, but generally recharged cartridges cost less.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, Flex Your Power and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.

***“Preserve a Planet—
Buy Recycled Products”***

